

The claims defining the invention are as follows:

1. A method of compositing at least one graphical object with an image, said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said method
5 comprising the steps of:

generating at least one opacity channel having associated opacity component values;

compositing the colour and opacity component values of said at least one object with the colour and opacity component values of said image; and

10 compositing said opacity component values of said at least one object with that of said at least one opacity channel to produce an altered opacity channel, said altered opacity channel thereby representing the opacity component values associated with said image remaining in said image following composition with said colour and opacity components of said at least one object.

15 2. A method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of utilising said altered opacity channel to remove the colour and opacity component values of said image remaining in said image following composition with said colour and opacity component values of said at least one object.

20 3. A method according to claim 2, further comprising the step of utilising said altered opacity channel to composite the colour and opacity component values of said at least one object with the colour and opacity component values of said image.

- 37 -

4. A method according to claim any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein said at least one object is one object of a grouped plurality of objects.

5. A method according to claim 4, further comprising the step of applying a group effect to said grouped plurality of objects.

6. A method according to claim 4, further comprising the step of compositing colour and opacity component values of each object of said grouped plurality of objects with the colour and opacity component values of said image.

7. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 6, further comprising the step of inverting said opacity values of said altered opacity channel.

8. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 7, further comprising the step of copying said image to form an image copy.

9. A method according to claim 8, further comprising the step of compositing colour and opacity component values of said at least one object with colour and opacity component values of said image copy.

10. A method according to claim 9, wherein said altered opacity channel represents opacity component values associated with said image copy remaining in said image copy following composition of said colour and opacity component values of said at least one object with said colour and opacity component values of said image copy.

11. A method according to claim 9, further comprising the step of utilising said altered opacity channel to remove the colour and opacity component values of said image copy remaining in said image copy following composition of said colour and opacity component values of said at least one object with said colour and opacity component values of said image copy.

12. A method according to claim 11, further comprising the step of utilising said altered opacity channel to composite the colour and opacity component values of said at least one object with the colour and opacity component values of said image.

13. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 12, wherein said associated colour and opacity component values of said object are accessed from an image file.

14. A method according to any one of claims 1 to 12, wherein said associated colour and opacity component values of said image are accessed from an image file.

15. A method of compositing at least one graphical object with an image, said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said method comprising the steps of:

generating at least one opacity channel having associated opacity component values;

compositing the colour and opacity component values of said at least one object with the colour and opacity component values of said image;

compositing said opacity component values of said at least one object with that of said at least one opacity channel to produce an altered opacity channel; and

utilising said altered opacity channel to remove the colour and opacity component values of said image remaining in said image following composition with said colour and opacity component values of said at least one object.

5 16. A method according to claim 15, further comprising the step of utilising said altered opacity channel to composite the colour and opacity component values of said at least one object with the colour and opacity component values of said image.

10 17. A method according to claim any one of claims 15 or 16, wherein said at least one object is one object of a grouped plurality of objects.

18. A method of compositing a grouped plurality of graphical objects with an image, each said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said method comprising the steps of:

15 generating at least one opacity channel having associated opacity component values;

compositing the colour and opacity component values of each of said objects with the colour and opacity component values of said image;

20 compositing said opacity component values of each of said objects with that of said at least one opacity channel to produce an altered opacity channel; and

utilising said altered opacity channel to remove the colour and opacity component values of said image remaining in said image following composition with the colour and opacity component values of each of said objects.

19. A method according to claim 18, further comprising the step of copying said image to form an image copy.

20. A method according to claim 19, further comprising the step of compositing the colour and opacity component values of each object of said grouped plurality of objects with colour and opacity component values of said image copy.

21. An apparatus for compositing at least one graphical object with an image, said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said apparatus comprising:

means for generating at least one opacity channel having associated opacity component values;

means for compositing the colour and opacity component values of said at least one object with the colour and opacity component values of said image; and

means for compositing said opacity component values of said at least one object with that of said at least one opacity channel to produce an altered opacity channel, said altered opacity channel thereby representing the opacity component values associated with said image remaining in said image following composition with said colour and opacity components of said at least one object.

22. An apparatus for compositing at least one graphical object with an image, said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said apparatus comprising:

means for generating at least one opacity channel having associated opacity component values;

means for compositing the colour and opacity component values of said at least one object with the colour and opacity component values of said image;

means for compositing said opacity component values of said at least one object with that of said at least one opacity channel to produce an altered opacity channel; and

5 utilising said altered opacity channel to remove the colour and opacity component values of said image remaining in said image following composition with said colour and opacity component values of said at least one object.

23. An apparatus for compositing a grouped plurality of graphical objects with an
10 image, each said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said apparatus comprising:

means for generating at least one opacity channel having associated opacity component values;

means for compositing the colour and opacity component values of each of said
15 objects with the colour and opacity component values of said image;

means for compositing said opacity component values of each of said objects with that of said at least one opacity channel to produce an altered opacity channel; and
utilising said altered opacity channel to remove the colour and opacity component values of said image remaining in said image following composition with the colour and opacity
20 component values of each of said objects.

24. An apparatus for compositing at least one graphical object with an image, said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said apparatus comprising:

25 a memory for storing a program; and

a processor for executing said program, said program comprising:

code for generating at least one opacity channel having associated opacity component values;

code for compositing the colour and opacity component values of said at least one object with the colour and opacity component values of said image; and

code for compositing said opacity component values of said at least one object with that of said at least one opacity channel to produce an altered opacity channel, said altered opacity channel thereby representing the opacity component values associated with said image remaining in said image following composition with said colour and opacity components of said at least one object.

25. An apparatus for compositing at least one graphical object with an image, said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said apparatus comprising:

a memory for storing a program; and

a processor for executing said program, said program comprising:

code for generating at least one opacity channel having associated opacity component values;

code for compositing the colour and opacity component values of said at least one object with the colour and opacity component values of said image;

code for compositing said opacity component values of said at least one object with that of said at least one opacity channel to produce an altered opacity channel; and

code for utilising said altered opacity channel to remove the colour and opacity component values of said image remaining in said image following

composition with said colour and opacity component values of said at least one object.

26. An apparatus for compositing a grouped plurality of graphical objects with an image, each said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said apparatus comprising:

a memory for storing a program; and

a processor for executing said program, said program comprising:

code for generating at least one opacity channel having associated opacity component values;

code for compositing the colour and opacity component values of each of said objects with the colour and opacity component values of said image;

code for compositing said opacity component values of each of said objects with that of said at least one opacity channel to produce an altered opacity channel;

and

code for utilising said altered opacity channel to remove the colour and opacity component values of said image remaining in said image following composition with the colour and opacity component values of each of said objects.

27. A computer program for compositing at least one graphical object with an image, said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said program comprising:

code for generating at least one opacity channel having associated opacity component values;

code for compositing the colour and opacity component values of said at least one object with the colour and opacity component values of said image; and

code for compositing said opacity component values of said at least one object with that of said at least one opacity channel to produce an altered opacity channel, said altered
5 opacity channel thereby representing the opacity component values associated with said image remaining in said image following composition with said colour and opacity components of said at least one object.

28. A computer program for compositing at least one graphical object with an image,
10 said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said program comprising:

code for generating at least one opacity channel having associated opacity component values;

code for compositing the colour and opacity component values of said at least one
15 object with the colour and opacity component values of said image;

code for compositing said opacity component values of said at least one object with that of said at least one opacity channel to produce an altered opacity channel; and

code for utilising said altered opacity channel to remove the colour and opacity component values of said image remaining in said image following composition with said
20 colour and opacity component values of said at least one object.

29. A computer program for compositing a grouped plurality of graphical objects with an image, each said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said program comprising:

code for generating at least one opacity channel having associated opacity component values;

code for compositing the colour and opacity component values of each of said objects with the colour and opacity component values of said image;

5 code for compositing said opacity component values of each of said objects with that of said at least one opacity channel to produce an altered opacity channel; and

code for utilising said altered opacity channel to remove the colour and opacity component values of said image remaining in said image following composition with the colour and opacity component values of each of said objects.

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30. A computer program product having a computer readable medium having a computer program recorded therein for compositing at least one graphical object with an image, said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said computer program product comprising:

15 computer program code means for generating at least one opacity channel having associated opacity component values;

computer program code means for compositing the colour and opacity component values of said at least one object with the colour and opacity component values of said image; and

20 computer program code means for compositing said opacity component values of said at least one object with that of said at least one opacity channel to produce an altered opacity channel, said altered opacity channel thereby representing the opacity component values associated with said image remaining in said image following composition with said colour and opacity components of said at least one object.

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31. A computer program product having a computer readable medium having a computer program recorded therein for compositing at least one graphical object with an image, said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said computer program product comprising:

5 computer program code means for generating at least one opacity channel having associated opacity component values;

computer program code means for compositing the colour and opacity component values of said at least one object with the colour and opacity component values of said image;

10 computer program code means for compositing said opacity component values of said at least one object with that of said at least one opacity channel to produce an altered opacity channel; and

computer program code means for utilising said altered opacity channel to remove the colour and opacity component values of said image remaining in said image following
15 composition with said colour and opacity component values of said at least one object.

32. A computer program product having a computer readable medium having a computer program recorded therein for compositing a grouped plurality of graphical objects with an image, each said object and said image having associated colour and
20 opacity component values, said computer program product comprising:

computer program code means for generating at least one opacity channel having associated opacity component values;

computer program code means for compositing the colour and opacity component values of each of said objects with the colour and opacity component values of said
25 image;

computer program code means for compositing said opacity component values of each of said objects with that of said at least one opacity channel to produce an altered opacity channel; and

computer program code means for utilising said altered opacity channel to remove
5 the colour and opacity component values of said image remaining in said image following composition with the colour and opacity component values of each of said objects.

33.. A method of compositing at least one graphical object with an image, said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said method
10 being substantially as herein before described with reference to any one of the embodiments as that embodiment is illustrated in Figs. 7 to 17 of the accompanying drawings.

34. A method of compositing a grouped plurality of graphical objects with an image,
15 each said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said method being substantially as herein before described with reference to any one of the embodiments as that embodiment is illustrated in Figs. 7 to 17 of the accompanying drawings.

20 35. An apparatus for compositing at least one graphical object with an image, said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said apparatus being substantially as herein before described with reference to any one of the embodiments as that embodiment is illustrated in Figs. 7 to 17 of the accompanying drawings.

36. An apparatus for compositing a grouped plurality of graphical objects with an image, each said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said apparatus being substantially as herein before described with reference to any one of the embodiments as that embodiment is illustrated in Figs. 7 to 17 of the accompanying drawings.

37. A computer program for compositing at least one graphical object with an image, said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said program being substantially as herein before described with reference to any one of the embodiments as that embodiment is illustrated in Figs. 7 to 17 of the accompanying drawings.

38. A computer program for compositing a grouped plurality of graphical objects with an image, each said object and said image having associated colour and opacity component values, said program being substantially as herein before described with reference to any one of the embodiments as that embodiment is illustrated in Figs. 7 to 17 of the accompanying drawings.